

# Western Business Men's Convention

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Record of the Views held on Various Matters, ex-  
pressed by Resolutions, passed at the  
Various Sessions held.

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Printed and distributed by the Winnipeg Board of Trade  
at the request of the Convention.

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WINNIPEG :  
THE STOKE CO., PRINTERS,  
1897.



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# Western Business Men's Convention.

HELD AT WINNIPEG, ON THE 4th  
AND 5th FEBRUARY, 1897.

DEAR SIR.—I beg to hand you herewith copies of the resolutions passed at the above convention.

The Winnipeg Board of Trade, by request, acted as convenor of the gathering, and sent out a very large number of invitations to business men, resident from Lake Superior to the Rocky Mountains. Over two hundred business men attended the sessions, and in addition letters endorsing the object of the convention and advocating the holding, periodically, of gatherings of Western business men, were received from some two hundred others.

It is satisfactory to be able to state that those in attendance expressed themselves as quite satisfied with the results of the convention and the most valuable information advanced during the course of the discussions which arose when the various resolutions were under consideration.

I have the honor to be,  
Sir,  
Your Obedient Servant,

CHAS. N. BELL,  
Secretary to the Convention.

## IMMIGRATION.

Whereas, it is now universally admitted that the hope and future welfare of the Dominion very largely depend upon the development of Western Canada;

And Whereas, in that portion of the country especially lying to the west of Fort William, there are immense areas of undoubtedly rich and productive lands, and great resources in mineral, timber, fishing, and other interests, sufficient to furnish employment, and comfortable homes for many millions more of industrious people, the successful and rapid settlement of which would add greatly to the material interests of all classes and every section of our Dominion.

And Whereas, the duty of promoting such settlement rests mainly in the first instance on our various Governments, acting as trustees of the people, and using their money for the good of the whole.

Therefore, be it Resolved, that this Convention desires unanimously to urge most strongly on the immediate attention of the Federal and Provincial, as well as the various Municipal authorities the need of increased suitable Immigration as one of vital and far reaching importance.

And, as means to further the requirements of the country in this behalf, would beg leave respectfully to make the following recommendations, namely :

1. That far more effort be used than has yet been made.
2. That much larger appropriations be set aside for Immigration in accordance with its importance, as necessary and profitable public expenditure.
3. That united efforts be used, and strictly business-like methods free from party influence.
4. That wise selection be exercised, and thoughtful attention be given to the needs and facilities of incoming home-seekers in order as far as possible to encourage and help them to attain the comfort and ultimate success so readily within reach of men of the right kind.

This Convention is also deeply impressed with the great value and need of individual exertion, and would

pledge the members thereof, and urge on each and every one of the community to try and do something to help along the common good, and thus secure the rapid and substantial progress which the advantages and attractions of Canada should unquestionably command.

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#### CANADIAN COMMERCIAL AGENTS ABROAD.

Resolved—Whereas the most suitable and most desirable settlers for Canada, outside of those from the British Isles, are to be obtained from the Continental countries of Northern Europe, in nearly all of which countries the work of foreign emigration agents is forbidden by law;

And Whereas the United States, and other nations of America, have in all such countries numerous consuls and vice-consuls, many of whom hold office without emolument, and whose duties imply the furnishing of information regarding their country and its resources to all intending emigrants applying to them for such information, thus doing the work of emigration agents as far as the laws of the countries in which they reside will permit, and securing for the country they represent the bulk of the overflow of the population from those nations of Northern Europe.

And Whereas Canada, as a Colony of Great Britain, not having the right of appointing consular or other agents having direct diplomatic relations with foreign countries, and being only one of the many Colonies of the Empire not in a position to expect British Consuls to do for the Dominion the work which United States Consuls and Vice-Consuls do for their own country in the interests of immigration, therefore Canada works under great disadvantages, and has heretofore been powerless to secure anything like a fair share of the valuable class of settlers, who have flocked from the countries of Northern Europe to the new world.

Therefore be it Resolved, after careful consideration of this anomalous and disadvantageous situation in which Canada is placed, this convention would strongly urge the

appointing by the Dominion Government of a regular staff of Commercial Agents General, one to each of the countries referred to, who could each have numerous deputies in leading points of each country; and that one leading duty of such agents and their deputies should be to furnish to applicants in search of a home in the New World, the fullest information regarding the resources of our Dominion and its advantages as a new land to settle in, always, it is scarcely necessary to say, confining their efforts in this work, strictly within the limits of the laws of the country in which they may reside.

This Convention sees also, in this arrangement a valuable power in furthering the trade interests of both importers and exporters in the Dominion, enabling importers to deal direct with foreign manufacturers, instead of through British middlemen, and also enabling exporters of grain and other Canadian products, to deal direct with Continental European purchasers, instead of through the commission houses of London, Liverpool and New York, as has been the general rule heretofore.

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## MANUFACTURING.

*Resolved*—That while there are great drawbacks to investing in manufacturing undertakings in the Canadian Northwest, largely due to the cost of living, and the lack of a large and ever ready market, there are, nevertheless, numerous fields in which successful manufacturing projects could be launched. These are to be found most easily in connection with products, the raw material which is produced here and shipped at heavy cost in a raw state, to be manufactured in the east and returned to our markets ready for the consumer, and in not a few instances where raw material is allowed to go to waste or destroyed, instead of being utilized for manufacturing purposes. That it should be borne in mind that the drawback of lack of population for a liberal market is yearly growing less formidable, as is evident by the number of industries which

have sprung up within the past few years and are now flourishing. The wonderful increase within a dozen years in flour milling, by which at least one-fifth of our wheat crop is annually ground into flour, is one very strong proof of the field for manufacture from raw material produced here.

Taking these circumstances into consideration;

Be it Resolved—That this Convention desires to impress upon all good citizens of this country, that every encouragement should be given to the establishment in our midst of manufacturing industries, to supply local demands where that only is possible, and to export where that is possible; and especially should attention be given to building up industries which would utilize the immense amount of raw material now allowed to go to waste in this country.

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#### TWO CENT LETTER POSTAGE.

Resolved—That this Convention is of the opinion that a revision of the postal rates and classification of mail matter should be made, that would provide for a uniform rate of two cents per ounce on letters for carriage within Canada, and from Canada to Newfoundland and the United States.

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#### EARLY CLOSING.

Whereas it is the custom of the business people of many of our towns and villages to continue their establishments open to a very late hour of the night, and

Whereas such does not in any manner increase the amount of business to be done, does not give time for reasonable recreation, and is detrimental to health and spirits alike of proprietors and employees,

Therefore be it resolved, that in the opinion of this Convention, it is desirable that merchants in every busi-

ness community should have an understanding to close their places of business at a reasonable hour in the evening—6 o'clock—and that an understanding having been come to among the merchants of any given community, that they should then communicate with neighboring towns and villages to endeavor to have a similar arrangement made with a view of its universal adoption.

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### TRADE COUNCILS FOR SMALL TOWNS.

Whereas it would be of great advantage to the business men of Western Canada if some means existed that would enable those in one town or village to meet together for the consideration of matters of common interest and to communicate with those in other towns and villages.

And whereas Boards of Trade may be incorporated only in places having a population of 2,500, making it impossible to establish such Boards in small places.

And whereas this Convention considers that some form of Trade Councils, with a simple form of Constitution and By-laws, might be inaugurated and made workable.

Be it Resolved—That this Convention appoint a Committee (to be named by the chairman) to draft such form of Constitution and By-laws as may be deemed necessary, and further that members of this Convention agree to take steps to give a fair trial to the attempt to establish such Trade Councils, in the towns and villages where they reside.

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### PERMANENT GRAIN STANDARDS.

Resolved—That in view of the complications and differences of opinion prevailing in regard to the making of Grain Standards some more simple and stable method should be adopted.

That Grain Standards should as nearly as possible be made similar in quality and value to those with which our Manitoba and Northwest wheat comes in competition.

That owing to the continual changing of standard samples under the present method and the impossibility of European importers having any knowledge of what they are to expect from this country until a large portion of our crop has been marketed, legislation should be asked of the Dominion Government looking to the establishment of a permanent standard under the Act which alone should govern inspectors in their work, thus doing away with the present cumbersome and unsatisfactory method of making yearly standards by a Standards Board.

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#### FIRE INSURANCE RATING

Resolved—That the present rates of Fire Insurance on Town and Village property where there is no fire protection are unfairly apportioned, and that the Manitoba Board of Underwriters should be petitioned to appoint an inspector who will rate every risk according to its construction, occupation and exposure.

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#### COLD STORAGE AND REFRIGERATOR TRANSPORTATION

Whereas, the matter of providing cold storage and refrigerator transportation to cover the wants of the trade in perishable goods, not only of Western Canada but of the Dominion at large, has now assumed large proportions,

And whereas, private efforts to supply the cold storage wants of different localities utterly fail to grasp the difficulty as a whole, and tends to build up rival and contending interests, which cannot with economy be made to act in cohesion for the benefit of business generally,

Therefore this Convention recognizes the fact, that an economical system of public cold storage linked with an efficient refrigerator system of transportation is necessary for Canada as a whole, and any delay in providing such, tend to hamper and retard the growth of the productions of perishable products of the Dominion.

Furthermore the Convention recognizes the fact that such a system can be best provided by the great trunk lines of railway, who should handle the receipt and delivery of perishable goods from cold storage, as they handle the receipt and delivery of other goods carried by them, and that these Railway companies should provide such cold storage warehouses at central points and control their management, and an efficient refrigerator system in connection therewith.

Also that the project of a system of public cold storage for the whole Dominion extending from the Atlantic to the Pacific, is one which should receive liberal encouragement and aid from the Dominion Government, and that said Government should also take steps to have a thorough system of refrigerator storage in connection with any new fast line of trans-Atlantic packets in receipt of Government aid.

#### CREAMERY PRODUCTS.

Resolved—That owing to the changed conditions in the dairy trade, owing to the introduction of the factory system, and to other causes, it is more necessary than ever that dairy grades of butter should be marketed promptly, while it is fresh and sweet, in order to enable it to compete at all with fine factory butter.

That where butter factories have been established it is urged that the merchants and farmers should encourage their support in every way possible of the factories in their respective districts in preference to home-made dairy butter as the demand for dairy grades of butter is limited and in many cases cannot be exported to advantage in competition with factory-made goods.

Merchants who handle butter are further advised to urge their patrons to use a good quality of dairy salt in making butter and to use uniform packages of desirable size and style.

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## AUDITING OF MUNICIPAL AND SCHOOL ACCOUNTS.

Whereas, the manner of auditing Municipality and School District Account Books prevalent is generally unreliable, incomplete and imperfect, failing to furnish the public or the business and banking concerns with that guarantee as to the correct state of such accounts or the true financial standing of such Municipalities and School Districts which is so desirable and useful in the premises.

Be it Therefore Resolved, that a recommendation be made to the Provincial Government and Northwest Assembly, that legislation be enacted providing for the granting of certificates of proficiency to properly qualified and skilled accountants in the various parts of the Province either through the Chartered Accountants Association or otherwise, and making it compulsory upon Municipal Councils, Reeves and School Boards to employ only such accountants or auditors for the purposes of making the prescribed yearly audits of their various books, vouchers and statements, with all such other provisions as may be found necessary to the end that a thorough, complete and reliable audit may be made and published once a year regarding the transactions and financial standing of all our Municipalities and School Districts.

## MERCHANDISE ASSESSMENT.

Resolved.—That the assessment of stocks of merchandise for municipal taxation as at present should be abolished;

a system of taxation based on rental value or income being considered fairer.

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### EXEMPTIONS.

Resolved—That any legislation, whether in the form of exemption laws or otherwise, which places the debtor possessed of means beyond the power of the creditor to collect just debts from him is a deliberate abuse of the powers placed in the hands of legislators, and places a premium upon dishonesty;

And Furthermore, even the economic advantages alleged to be gained by exemption legislation, cannot possibly be attained by any law or laws, which enable a man to evade payment for the food, clothing and other necessary household supplies for his home.

Therefore, this Convention appeals to the Legislature of Manitoba and Northwest Assembly to amend the Exemption provisions of such laws, so as to give powers of seizure within the limits now exempt to creditors who have supplied such household goods.

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### COLLECTION OF SMALL DEBTS, ETC.

Whereas, a large volume of business is done under the credit system, and it is desirable that the seller should be protected against the dishonest purchaser,

Resolved—First, That the existing law should be modified so that the cost of collecting small debts be reduced.

Second, That the amount exempt from garnishee order should be reduced to \$10.00, and that the assignment of unearned salaries be made illegal.

Third, That so far as the collection of debt is concerned government employees should be placed on the same footing as other citizens.

## WESTERN WATERWAYS.

**Resolved**—That this Convention, composed of business men of Manitoba and the Territories, learn with satisfaction that the Dominion Government is now taking steps looking toward the construction of a canal at the St. Andrew's Rapids, recognizing as they do that the construction of this work would form one of the most important links in the development of our great western waterways.

This Convention would urge the early completion of this important work, and would further urge upon the Dominion Government that during the coming summer, survey work be undertaken of a preliminary nature at least to determine the following:

First. The feasibility and approximate cost of securing an unbroken water route from the upper North Saskatchewan to Winnipeg and other Manitoba points via the Lake Winnipeg route, and also the alternate route via Lakes Manitoba and Winnipegosis and the Assiniboine River.

Secondly. The feasibility of securing a water route from the Red River to the Lake of the Woods, and thence westerly to Lake Superior.

Thirdly. The feasibility of opening a water route Lake Winnipeg to Hudson Bay.

This Convention would further urge upon the Dominion Government the advisability of considering the usefulness of the navigable waterways of the Mackenzie River Basin, in improving communication in that great region.

The business men of Manitoba and the Territories assembled at this Convention, would further desire to place themselves on record as opposed to the granting of control over any of our waterways to private individuals or corporations.

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## EXCESSIVE EXPRESS CHARGES.

Whereas the express charges on goods from point to point over the western division of the Canadian Pacific

Railway Company are based upon an advance over rates charged by the same company in the eastern provinces of from 83½ to 125 per cent and over, and

Whereas such excessive rates are very detrimental to the interest of the business community of this country, and

Whereas the reducing of the express charges on the western division would result in a very material increase of business done,

Therefore be it Resolved, That the Dominion Express Company be memorialized and requested to reduce the rates on the western division to a point but little, if any, in excess of those charged in the eastern provinces.

NOTE—Comparisons of express rates in existence for 100 pounds weight.

Toronto to Myrtle, Ont.	57 miles	\$ .60	50c advance.
Winnipeg to Redburn, Man.	58 "	.76	
Toronto to Peterboro, Ont.	78 "	.75	33½c "
Winnipeg to Sagke, Man.	71 "	.60	33½c "
Toronto to Tweed, Ont.	131 "	.92	66½c "
Winnipeg to Brandon, Man.	133 "	1.50	100c "
Toronto to Mountain Grove, Ont.	163 "	1.00	70c "
Winnipeg to Alexander, Man.	146 "	.75	50c "
Toronto to Perth, Ont.	158 "	1.00	70c "
Winnipeg to Virden, Man.	180 "	1.00	100c "
Toronto to Montreal, Que.	219 "	.25	160c "
Winnipeg to Qu'Appelle, Ass.	324 "	2.00	160c "

## FREIGHT RATES ON C. P. R.—WESTERN DIVISION

Whereas it is advisable that trade between the different points within the Province of Manitoba and the Territories to the west of us should increase to the greatest possible degree, and

Whereas the rates charged on the various lines of communication have much to do with the increase or otherwise of the said traffic, and

Whereas the rates of freight charged on the Canadian Pacific Railway from point to point within Manitoba and the Northwest Territories are very greatly in excess of the rates charged for similar service in the Eastern Provinces on that road,

Therefore be it Resolved That the Dominion Government be memorialized and asked that in any arrangement with the Canadian Pacific Railway Company looking to the construction of the Crow's Nest Pass Railway, the purchasing of lands or other desheds, that the matters of rates of freight on the Western Division be taken into consideration and such arrangement made as will bring them down to but little, if any, over the rates prevailing in the Eastern Provinces.

#### CROW'S NEST PASS RAILWAY.

"Whereas, the projected railway through Crow's Nest Pass will be a most important factor in developing the mineral resources of British Columbia on one side of the Rocky Mountains and the agricultural and ranching industries of the Northwest Territories on the other side,

And that this Pass, being the only one south of that occupied by the Canadian Pacific Railway, is the only means of obtaining access to the immense mineral wealth on the Canadian side of the International boundary,

That the preliminary construction work already commenced in this Pass, and the method in which grading has been done, lead very strongly to the conclusion that through certain portions of it the construction of more than one line of railway is impracticable,

That nowhere on this continent can an instance be found of any railway company controlling more than one pass through the Rocky Mountains, and the Canadian Pacific Railway Company already controls the only other avenue through them lying within 350 miles of the International boundary, and if this railway is constructed in the near future by a private corporation, even should such cor-

poration not be the Canadian Pacific Railway Company, there is grave reason to fear that that company will control the railway.

That, in view of the almost fabulous resources of the Kootenay districts, we feel it would be unwise from a national standpoint, for the Government to part with the control of the only natural channel of transportation to these regions by vesting it in any private corporation, or to suffer anything to be done that may prevent the possibility of future railway competition;

Therefore, be it Resolved, that in the opinion of this Convention it would be for the best interests, not only of the Territories and British Columbia, but the Dominion at large, that the projected railway through the Crow's Nest Pass should be constructed and operated by the Government of Canada, or in the alternative, if the former course should be deemed impracticable or impossible, and the construction of the railway be left to a private company, that the right to have running powers over that portion of the railway through or at either outlet of the Crow's Nest Pass shall be preserved for any railway or railways, hereafter desiring it, to be exercised upon such terms as the Railway Committee of the Privy Council may deem proper."

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## FREIGHT RATES BETWEEN PRAIRIES AND BRITISH COLUMBIA.

Resolved—That in the interest of extension of trade between Manitoba and the Territories on the one hand, and British Columbia on the other, this Convention would view with favor any efforts in the direction of reducing freight rates and improving communication between the prairie districts and British Columbia.

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## RAILROAD TO HUDSON BAY.

Resolved—That this Convention desire to impress upon the Dominion Government the extreme desirability of having a railroad built to connect the Province of Manitoba and the Northwest Territories with the Hudson Bay and that substantial aid should be given to any bona fide company undertaking the construction of such a railroad.

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## EXTENSION OF PIPESTONE BRANCH OF C. P. R.

Resolved—That this Convention desires to impress upon the Canadian Pacific Railway managers the necessity for the extension of the Pipestone Branch of their road into the Moose Mountain district, seeing there is a well-settled country there, certainly hundreds of settlers who have been located there from twelve to fifteen years, who have still to haul their marketable products from thirty to seventy miles to the nearest railway point.

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## AID TO MANITOBA & NORTH-WESTERN R.Y.

Resolved—That in the opinion of this Convention substantial aid should be given by the Dominion Government to the Manitoba & Northwestern Railway to enable the Company to extend its line to the town of Prince Albert as the Charter requires, and that on condition of giving such aid the Company should be compelled to prosecute the work and carry it to completion within eighteen months, and give guarantees to the Government of fair freight and passenger rates.

And it is the opinion of this Convention that the road would open up a most fertile district, and prove, as soon as opened for traffic, a most profitable route, as nearly one-

half of the route to be traversed, from Yorkton to Prince Albert is already thickly settled. And also that it should be maintained as now, an independent road.



